OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON, MA 02133
(617) 725-4000

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF STATE
PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
2008 JUL 10 PM 2:10

By His Excellency

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 503

INTEGRATING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES INTO THE COMMONWEALTH

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has been a home and a haven for new immigrants, refugees and their descendants throughout its history; and

WHEREAS, for more than three centuries immigrants and refugees have come to the United States and this Commonwealth for economic opportunity, religious freedom, and civil liberties, and have found the means to establish a new life here; and

WHEREAS, this tradition continues to this day, as the Commonwealth's immigrant population, which comprises 14 percent of the state's population and 17 percent of its workforce, continues to grow; and

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

WHEREAS, this immigrant and refugee population faces many challenges and obstacles on the path to becoming productive and self-sufficient new Americans residing in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth recognizes that the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into our society is critical to our economic and civic well-being; and

WHEREAS, immigrants and refugees have great potential to contribute to the Commonwealth's communities as residents, entrepreneurs, students and employees, and it is in the interest of all that their potential be nurtured and encouraged; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth would benefit from having more of our eligible immigrants and refugees become naturalized citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth would benefit from a coordinated approach to immigrant policy that uses immigrants' and refugees' skills and assets and directs state efforts to accelerate immigrants' and refugees' integration into the community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Deval L. Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution, Part 2, c. 2, § I, Art. I, do hereby order as follows:

Section 1. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall develop a New Americans Agenda, a comprehensive and strategic statewide approach to successfully integrate our immigrant and refugee populations that builds upon the strengths of immigrants and refugees in the Commonwealth. The New Americans Agenda will help to ensure that these populations become self-sufficient and integrated members of our economy and communities as quickly as possible.

Section 2. The Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (MORI), the state agency chiefly responsible for refugee resettlement and state policies affecting immigrant and refugee populations, shall work with the Governor's Advisory Council for Refugees and Immigrants (GACRI) to develop policy recommendations for the New

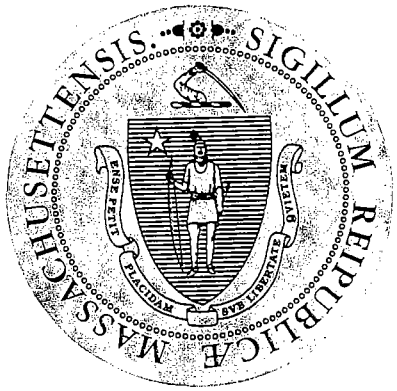
Americans Agenda. MORI and the GACRI shall be authorized to call upon any state department, office, division or agency to seek information about services, personnel and policies necessary to develop their recommendations pursuant to this Order. MORI and the GACRI shall also consult with host communities across the Commonwealth concerning issues that affect immigrants and refugees. MORI and the GACRI may consult with knowledgeable individuals in the public or private sector on any aspect of their mission to help assess the needs of immigrant and refugee populations and determine best practices for their integration.

Section 3. MORI shall work with the Governor's Office of Civic Engagement and the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) to develop a New Americans Network of community-based organizations across the Commonwealth that will organize a series of public meetings to take testimony from community groups, business leaders, local officials and other interested persons. This information shall be considered in the development of policy recommendations for the New Americans Agenda.

Section 4. MORI shall present its policy recommendations concerning the New Americans Agenda to the Governor no later than July 1, 2009. It shall include recommendations on how the Commonwealth can better prepare immigrants and refugees to become productive and self-sufficient members of society by addressing their strengths and needs for greater access in areas including but not limited to citizenship assistance, employment/workforce training, English language proficiency, education, civil rights, fair housing, healthcare and public safety.

Section 5. After approval by the Governor or his designee, MORI's policy recommendations shall be forwarded to state departments, offices, divisions and agencies. Those entities shall develop New Americans plans that incorporate effective training and resources, culturally and linguistically competent and appropriate services, and administrative practices that address the needs of immigrants and refugees. State departments, offices, divisions and agencies shall consider the New Americans Agenda policy recommendations in creating the plans. Plans shall be submitted to the Governor or his

designee no later than one year following their receipt of the policy recommendations.



Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston this 9th day of July in the year of our Lord two thousand and eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America two hundred and thirty-two.

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
Secretary of the Commonwealth

GOD SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS